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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 001558

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [MARR](#) [ETRD](#) [ECON](#)

SUBJECT: MFA MINISTER OF STATE ON TRADE AND LIBERIA

REF: A. ABUJA 1503

[B](#). STATE 250578

CLASSIFIED BY DCM RICK ROBERTS FOR REASONS 1.5 (b) AND (d).

[1](#)1. (U) When then CDA Roberts delivered the Najaf demarche (REF B) to MFA Minister of State Samaila on September 2, the MinState raised agricultural subsidies and Liberia. The Najaf part of the conversation was reported Ref A.

U.S./EU AGRICULTURAL SUBSIDIES IMPEDE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT

[1](#)2. (C) Somaila emphasized that U.S. and European agricultural subsidies posed a major obstacle to development in Sub-Saharan Africa. Noting that 80 percent of Sub-Saharan Africans worked in agriculture, he suggested that instead of spending billions of dollars per year on agricultural subsidies, the U.S. and Europe should commit those funds to combating poverty and disease in Africa. Samaila said the GON was committed to taking advantage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) to increase agricultural exports, and was working to comply with AGOA regulations. But continuing U.S. and EU subsidies made those exports uncompetitive, even under AGOA.

LIBERIA

[1](#)3. (C) Samaila said the GON was committed to staying the course in Liberia. Repeating a refrain we have heard from President Obasanjo, Samaila said a peaceful and stable Liberia was the key to the maintenance of peace and stability in West Africa. While Liberia was a top GON priority, Nigeria would need the continued assistance of the U.S. and the international community to bring order to Liberia and to better the lives of its people. Samaila added that Nigeria was disappointed that the U.S. forces were not more involved onshore in Liberia, believing that U.S. forces would join ECOWAS in the PKO once Charles Taylor departed Liberia.

[1](#)4. (C) COMMENT: Samaila's expectation of U.S. military involvement in the Liberian PKO is not uncommon. Prior to Taylor's departure, many Nigerians believed that only direct U.S. intervention could settle the conflict between the GOL, LURD and MODEL, as well as address humanitarian needs in and around Monrovia. With Taylor's departure and Nigerian-led ECOWAS forces in position, most Nigerians now see the situation improving but will continue to be wary of West African nations' ability to maintain the peace without the financial, logistical, and if need be, military support from the U.S. and the international community until the PKO becomes a UN operation.
MEECE